

## 20 Tips to Integrate New Team Members

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When you invest in a new hire, or have additions to your team through re-organization, merger or acquisition, the team and team dynamic will change.

To successfully integrate new members and help them to begin to contribute, you want to bring them up to speed quickly, initiate key relationships, and establish direction and focus.

Early wins build credibility and set them on the road to further success.

Here are 20 tips to increase your chances of success...

### 1) Start engagement before the first day

Once an offer has been accepted, initiate dialog and share publicly available information that provides an overview of the organization, its employees and its work.

### 2) Create a schedule and gather material that will help get them started

You will likely be scheduling a lot of one-on-ones at the outset. As part of orientation, prepare introductory information that will accelerate learning and assist in a smooth start.

### 3) Introduce everyone on the team

Have the new member(s) create a bio. Share everyone's bio and make personal introductions. Let everyone know who to go to for what. Use an organization chart if helpful.

### 4) Communicate the basics

Explain the overall organization (the big picture), its vision, mission and values. Describe how your department and team fit in and give an overview of the work of the team. Discuss broad performance and workplace expectations and ensure company policies and procedures have been provided.

### 5) Explain your culture (the best you can)

Explain the team (and organization) culture and norms – e.g. Mode of operation and mix of leadership styles, how often and how we meet, how we plan and make decisions, our approach to risk-taking.

Communicate that you welcome input and are excited to hear their point of view in meetings and discussions. Make a note to follow through.

### 6) Communicate your expectations for the role

Discuss the role in context of the department and company. Explain goals and objectives. Set a schedule to meet regularly and continue to guide them, particularly through the first months. Explain all relevant work projects and expected collaboration with peers and other teams.

## **7) Bring your new team together**

Whether through group lunches, on-site gathering or off-sites – find ways to bring the team together and interact. Pay particular attention to involving team members who are in remote locations.

## **8) Spread the word (i.e. don't keep it a secret)**

Let others in the organization know about the new members(s). Have them create a bio to share. Encourage people to stop by and say hello.

## **9) Introduce them to their formal stakeholders.**

Prioritize key stakeholders and make introductions in person. Help your new team members understand who their critical stakeholders are and why.

## **10) ...And let them know who the connectors are**

In addition to formal stakeholders, explain the informal network: the go-to people for knowledge, the connectors etc.

## **11) Show them around and explain the jargon**

Give them a tour of the office or facility.

Have someone explain the 'little' things that make life easier, such as acronyms, best places to park, how to use the photocopier or printer. If there's a lot – have someone create a cheat sheet.

## **12) Assign a "buddy"**

Give them a buddy — typically someone of a peer level who knows the ropes and can readily answer formal and informal questions and explain the subtext. They can help people get situated.

## **13) Help them become part of the workflow**

Connect people to relevant project groups, chats and discussion boards so they can understand what and how work is going with key projects, who is involved, and the status.

## **14) Offer prompt feedback and thank you's, and ask for feedback**

Give regular, constructive feedback. Ask for feedback and don't miss opportunities to reward, thank and congratulate.

This sets the precedent that ideas are welcome, demonstrates openness and a desire for improvement

## **15) Have an open door**

Communicate that your door is open to them. Create a time in the week when new hires can reach you informally.

#### **16) Create some learning objectives**

Having explained the projects, tasks and responsibilities they will be working on – have them evaluate skill gaps and create some learning and development objectives.

#### **17) Cultivate mentorship - including team mentorship**

Organizations with enough resources may allocate a mentor – typically someone more senior and experienced in the organization.

However, company knowledge is a collection of perspectives and experiences. Hence, it can be valuable to cultivate a “team approach” to mentorship where those with relevant knowledge and experience are encouraged to share it, cultivating an environment where questions can be readily asked and answered.

#### **18) Take responsibility!**

Take full responsibility for making sure your new team members are welcomed properly and given the support and coaching they will need to become fully functioning members of the team.

#### **19) Have them create a plan**

Armed with all this new information, encourage new team members to create a plan with objectives and actions for months 1, month 2 and month 3. Check in with them regularly to ensure they are on track and to answer their questions.

#### **20) Improve the process**

Gather feedback on how things went and seek to improve your process.

### **Bibliography**

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